/26 cont'd/

231 The greatest number of domestic animals owned by a single Miao family never exceeds a few heads if it owns any at all. This is due to several reasons: (1) The Miao are a propertyless people. 231 They are generally very poor and do not have enough capital to 511 buy cattle. (2) Since their life is uncertain, without their staying settled for a long period, animal husbandry is not likely to flourish. It is not easy for them to herd a large number of animals while they themselves move from place to place. (3) Cattle are always helpful for ploughing fields, but not every Miao family owns level fields which can be tilled by animal power; consequently raising cattle is not popular among them.

233 In raising cattle, the Miao have adopted a method of letting them graze on the uncultivated land. They simply let the cattle roam in the mountains, neither fastened with rope nor guarded by herders. Except that each animal bears the brand of its owner, the cattle move completely at will. These cattle are very wild and are hard to control. Once during a wedding ceremony, I saw the host send some men with guns out into the mountains to shoot his own cattle for meat to feast his guests. Their horses are also set free without bits or bridles. /27/ Not until they are needed for riding does the owner begin to search for them in the uncultivated 556 areas. The rearing of horses, however, is limited to only a few relatively wealthy families; the ordinary family does not raise horses. The dog is the most popular animal and can be found in almost every family, because it is indispensable in hunting. In addition, pigs and chickens are also raised. Owing to the scarcity of wet rice fields, however, geese and ducks are very rare.

5. Fishing

226 Though the Miao usually live high in the mountains, it is not unusual for them to go down to the streams to fish. Their fishing gear is exactly the same as that of the Li. They have fishing nets, [227] tun, sar co, lung, tun kū, and fishing lines. (For a description of the fishing gear and its use, consult my work, Report on an Investigation of the Li of Hainan Island. There is no need to discuss them

/41 cont'd/

554 of class antithesis, such as that of slaves versus masters, or serfs or tenant farmers versus landlords, which is the product of differences between the rich and the poor, does not appear among them. Every person, every family is a worker. There is no slavery but [567] only mutual assistance. The term "the poor and the poorer" /formulated by Dr. Sun Yat-sen/ is the most fitting phrase to be used in describing the Miao.

/42/ Chapter V. Daily Life

1. Diet

511 The life of the Miao people is ve. hard; they do not have 262 enough food. This hardship has created among them the habits of frugality. Except during feasts or festivals when they eat white, polished rice, they ordinarily eat rice gruel or other mixed grains three times a day. Ordinarily they do not have meat (except when they have good luck in hunting), and vegetables are also rare with the exception of some wild plants which they occasionally pick for [263] cooking. Salt, therefore, is usually used for a condiment while eating rice.

[527] It is only during feasts that they slaughter a cow or a pig and 262 have a lot to drink. The Miao do not know how to season, and 252 their cooking is difficult for an outside to eat. When they are entertaining guests, they usually cook the rice in a very special way. They put polished rice into a big pot. When it is half cooked, the rice is removed from the pot and dumped into a wooden cask, which is put back into the same pot and steamed with the half cooked rice in it. The wooden cask is about three ch'ih, or Chi- [415] nese feet, and is round. The bottom is pierced with small holes. When the water is boiling, the steam penetrates into the cask through the small holes, and the rice in the barrel is gradually cooked. It is said that this steamed rice is very delicious, but unfortunately we did not have the opportunity to taste it.

/120 cont'd/

181 leader was arrested and tortured by the li because he planned to es-
871 tablish a school. But they were not discouraged by these unhappy
648 occurrences and pushed on to their goal. On this occasion, when we arrived in the village this spring, they were just trying to establish a school and begged us to stay there for a few months to do some teaching for them. At the least, they hoped we would help them to establish the school. But owing to our busy schedule, we had to leave within a few days. It was really surprising that when we returned there within a week we found that they had already completed the construction of the school building. Teachers had also been engaged, waiting for the opening of classes. However, the Li leaders in the neighborhood were preventing them from doing this by every means. When we left there this conflict had not been yet settled. This event impressed us deeply.

448 The Miao all live high in the mountains. Their life is hard,
123 and they have no place to submit their complaints. Therefore, they are very glad to have some cultural and social intercourse with the Chinese, and, needless to say, they have great expectations of the government. When we arrived in the Miao area, they gave us a warm welcome, /121/ because, with the exception of a few Chinese merchants, very few Chinese ever visited there and were sympathetic toward them. However, a few shrewd Li leaders also are aware of this and try by every means to prevent the Chinese from meeting the Miao. The Li leaders especially try to prevent the Miao from getting in touch with the Chinese government, so that their complaints will not be heard by the outside world and they will have to endure all the injustices inflicted on them.

511 The differences in the way of life between these two groups of people have created two entirely different national characteristics. The Miao are a people without property. The mountain area in which they live is rented from others. They have to pay a certain amount of rent annually. These mountain lands usually have very poor soil. Water supply is insufficient. They have to work hard to combat
157 nature in order to obtain a minimum amount of produce to live on.
461 Such circumstances have made them a hard-working and very frugal

/131 cont'd/

000 This allayed their suspicion. We then took out our phonograph and
126 turned it on, which attracted swarms of Miao to gather around us.
Upon our request to look at the Miao scripts, which Headman Lu kept,
122 he let us peruse a number of them, among which were some very
treasured ones, depicting the origin and history of the Miao people.
● 511 Headman Lu talked to us at length about the hardships of the Miao;
their indescribable and hard-to-imagine low living conditions brought
forth our deepest sympathy. There were 12 families in this village,
under the family names of Lu, Teng, and P'an. Their main occupa-
tion was farming on lands rented from the Li people.

000 Limited by our schedule, we decided to cancel our trip to Pao-
ch'a village. We left Ang-chi at five-thirty to return to Ta-ch'i.
They gave us a warm farewell, asking us to return to their village
again. Upon our return, we found that Mr. Wang Chao-i had come
back from Pao-t'ing, and we had supper together, during which he
talked at length about his experiences in the Li area. His stories
fascinated us and sounded like fabulous legends.

Second month, twenty-third day. (Tuesday)

226 After breakfast we went to Wen-hua River to watch the Li carry
on their collective fishing. The two banks of the river were crowded
with men and women, about 60 or 70, each carrying fishing gear.
The stream was rather narrow, and the depth of the water was hardly
up to the knee. First, a section of the stream was selected, and then
large stones and rocks were put in the water to block the flow from
upstream, and small ditches were dug on the lower part of the stream
in order to half empty out the water. Then the poison was poured in.
When the fish touched this poison, they were immediately knocked
out and floated on the surface of the water. The Miao then rushed to
catch them with their nets. Today, the job was rather poorly done
because the water from upstream had not been dammed completely
enough to prevent the flow downward, thus preventing the emptying
out of the fishing area. Since the poison could not have its full effect
in the water, /132/ only a small amount of fish was killed and caught.

511 562 permanently as Yang Wu Shih. If his wife were from the Lo family, she would be known as Yang Lo Shih. In the first case, after his death she became Widow Wu, and in the second Widow Lo. In Yang-chia-sai there were three widows known as Widow Wang, distinguished as the mothers of Yung-ch'ing, T'ieh-k'uei, and Cheng-hsiang. Only the last of these sons had a wife and family and had assumed the generation name.

Boys were more desired than girls because inheritance is in the male line and sons carry on the worship of ancestors, as among the Chinese, but girls were also loved and desired. They had a greater economic value than among the Chinese because of the work they did even after they were married. They also kept closer contact with their parents after marriage than Chinese girls can do. This was indicated by the fact that they took their maiden name, even though they remained in the home of the deceased husband.

854 292 **Attitude Toward Children: Their Education.** While the child was very tiny the mother carried it spreadeagled on her back. The pad used was stiffened and large enough to extend up beyond a very small child's head. Below the stiffened pad a long apron hung down, which was trimmed with bands of white on the dark blue. A piece of figured cloth hung down from the top, which could be thrown over the child's head to shield it from sun or cold. Under and over the baby's posterior were placed pads of palm fiber. Long, two and a half inch wide bands of hemp cloth were fastened to the two upper corners of the stiffened piece, extended over the mother's shoulders, were crossed on the breast, went back under the child to hold it, and then were tied in front at the mother's waist. All the material but the hemp band was bought in market and there was no cross-stitch design on the loose piece as on that of the local Chung-chia and Chinese.

855 If there was no elderly woman or older child with whom the children could be left, the mother continued to carry the baby and also took a toddler along to the fields. But it was the task of elderly women and older children, boys and girls, to take care of the younger ones. If it was the youngest child, it often continued to nurse even when it was

as the Miao cook tastes something like steamed sawdust. In the lean weeks, before the spring harvest ripens, potatoes form the staple food of large numbers of the people. They can usually afford to have with their meals pounded rock salt purchased from the Chinese, but at times even this becomes a luxury; sometimes so scarce that people fortunate enough to buy it will lick it much as a Western child will lick a barley sugar stick. Being neither handicraftsmen, traders nor shopkeepers, the majority of the Miao are miserably poor. Their laws are those of the Chinese Government, and for money they use whatever is in currency amongst the Chinese. The old men of a neighbourhood are the rulers. One and all clothe themselves with homespun, and it is part of a woman's work to weave all the clothes necessary for herself, her husband and her children. This is no light task. The women have very much more work to do than men. They weave the clothes, carry the water, collect fire-wood, assist in the farm work and bear innumerable children, and so well do they manage this that a majority of the mothers are up and about the house a day after giving birth to a babe. Their clothing is distinct and different from Chinese dress. A man wears sandals, which he himself has made, short trousers reaching down to the knee, and a loose-fitting upper garment which is between a jacket and a gown. For head-dress he wears a turban made of a length of blue or white cloth. The women wear sandals, coloured puttees, and, scorning to wear trousers as Chinese women do,

[17 cont.]

291 The upper garment of a Short-skirt Hê Miao woman is also different from that of the other Miao. It resembles the mandarin jacket of the Chinese, reaching only to the hips, round-collared and buttoned in the middle, with large sleeves. Although there are five to seven pairs of bean-size lead buttons, actually only the first pair can be buttoned, the other pairs being loose, with only buttons but no loops. So during work a belt is tied around the waist. They do not wear panties. The skirt measures only one foot and two inches in length and is not fastened to the waist but below the waistline. It has inumerable pleats, from over five hundred to as many as a thousand. Therefore a skirt requires at least twenty feet of material. Both the front and rear parts of the skirt are covered with a piece of black cloth about six or seven inches in width and one or two inches longer than the skirt. The rear piece has an embroidered band of four inches at the hem. They never wear stockings. While working at home, in the field or on the river bank they are always barefoot. On formal occasions they wind strips of black cloth around their legs, from the ankles [18] up to the thighs. Each strip of leg band measures about twenty-four feet, and as it winds up layer on layer, it gives a swollen appearance. The straw sandals for men and women are made differently. The women's footwear resembles the Japanese wooden clogs, with a forklike rope attachment that enters in between the big toe and the rest of the toes, so that the rear and the back of the foot require no other attachments.

● [511] The costumes described above are for everyday wear. The Miao in this area are comparatively well-to-do. An average family is able to add a suit or two of new clothes for each member every year, and so even their ordinary clothes are clean and in good repair. Dirty and disorderly dresses are rarely seen. On festive occasions the men wear new clothes and the women, specially made embroidered clothes in brilliant designs. The [294] work on the embroideries begins during a girl's teen-age and continues for several years before it is completed. Ordinarily 301 the women do not use much jewelry. They do not wear earrings, neither do they have holes in the ears. They do wear one or

[30 cont.]

6. General Living Conditions

511 Due to limited space we cannot discuss all the phases of their living conditions. In sum, the Short-skirt Hê Miao are still passing through a phase of village economy. The necessities of life, except salt which is obtained from the Chinese, are all produced in the village. The area they occupy is quite fertile. Not long ago they produced a great deal of opium though they themselves are rarely addicted to it. They are, however, surrounded on four sides by the Chinese, and an extension of their cultivated acreage is therefore practically impossible. But their population has greatly increased in the course of centuries and in proportion the per family acreage under cultivation has greatly decreased. Although some few of them may be large landowners, the majority of the Hê Miao can maintain only the barest economic subsistence. Their continuous toil all year round yields merely a pittance, barely enough to ward off starvation. This kind of rigid economy [31] [161] together with the prevalence of smallpox increases the rate of mortality in recent years to such an extent that it follows closely the maximum birthrate, and thus manages to bring their population rate to a standstill: more people are being born, but more also are dying.

[212] They have no written language, their knowledge is limited, and their living standard is far below the standard of modern life. 648 Because of the backwardness of their civilization they are held in contempt by the Chinese. Due to repeated conflicts in the past between the Chinese and the Miao-I, a great deal of misunderstanding, suspicion and prejudice still exists between the two groups. Fortunately, there are no unified spoken language customs and habits among the various Miao-I groups, and so among their many millions of people there is yet no apparent consolidation of a minority group movement to oppose the 000 Chinese. If our government authorities can undertake the development of their educational standards on the one hand and the elimination of misunderstanding and racial prejudices on the

[132 cont.]

443 Even today they do not have a single market fair within the area and this shows how circumscribed is the sphere of their economic activity. Their only means of livelihood is agriculture. Almost 243 all the fields are terraced according to natural topography, rising from the bottom of the slope to the top in several hundred layers. The shape of the field is long and narrow, producing rice, wheat, corn and barley. These terraced fields are not fertile [242] and the Sheng Miao do not know how to apply fertilizer. Further- [132] more, the temperature in the whole area is very low, and a plentiful harvest is not possible. The proverb says that "when the soil is barren, the people must be poor." Although the ● 511 Sheng Miao toil all year round in the hard struggle for survival, they can only eke out a bare existence. Being in direct contact with them, the writer could watch at close quarters their extremely miserable conditions, which are pitiable indeed. Because of their ignorance they do not know how to save or to improve the method of production. In case of famine they cannot escape starvation, [133] which is the most important reason for the decrease in their population.

105 In our study of the Miao culture we find it varies with different ethnic units and localities, each having its peculiar traits. The distinguishing features of the Sheng Miao, who differ a great deal from the other tribes, are as follows:

1. Ignorant and straightforward, they are easily duped. They are ready to proclaim themselves "kings" and to create disturbances.

2. The men are black in complexion, red-eyed, dishevelled, and tall and big in stature.

3. Up to this day not a single one of them can talk fluent Chinese.

4. There are peculiar styles of costumes for men and women.

5. Their staple food is glutinous rice, supplemented by raw meat, raw blood, bees, locusts, centipedes, earthworms, tree worms, sand worms, water worms, mountain rats and lizards.

6. The women are fond of smoking leaf tobacco.

/301 cont./

372 [512] 342 one never forgets to cover the fire with ashes in order to keep it going until morning."

The division of space, therefore, corresponds approximately to that described by me, although the houses described by Savina seem to have more interior walls.

372 Fire is made with the help of flint and iron (Figs. 119 and 120). The tinder ignited by the sparks is blown on with the mouth. A bamboo tube is used to kindle a larger fire; I never saw firefans in use anywhere. /Figs. 119-122 appear [354] here./ Neither hearth nor fireplace has a smoke vent, so the smoke fills the interior until it slowly escapes into the open air through the gaps in the side walls.

[415] The objects needed to make fire are kept in a small bamboo container (Fig. 122). They are iron (Fig. 119), flints (Fig. 120), tinder (beaten bast of a certain tree), and a small stick of soft wood (Fig. 121) to start the fire. Such complete /302/ fire-making apparatus represents a very [511] valuable object and is carefully stored away. Not every adult [439] has the fire-making apparatus. Matches are also used, but [177] very sparingly, since they are bought from traders who appear only once a year. The firewood is piled up in great heaps against the outside wall of the house, but it also lies around in various places in the living room itself.

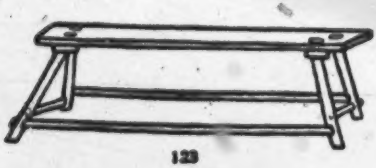
415 The grain mortar is built into the cooking and living room (see Fig. 139, the chapter, "House Furnishings, Household and Kitchen Utensils"). The wooden mortar is sunk completely into the floor. The movable lever arm of the pestle rests between two posts driven into the ground. At the end it has a treadle for foot operation. A grain mortar (Ill. [511] 96) is found in almost every house, as well as in the larger rice fields, and can also be operated easily by the children. /Figs. 123-126 appear here./

352 Furniture to sit on is owned only by a house-father with 511 a large family. In many houses, to be sure, there are parking [516] benches or small tables for offerings, but the family sits in

[see cat. 116, p645 – ANALYST]

/302 cont./

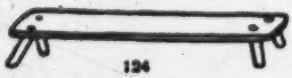
352 [511] [516] [264] the customary squatting position on mats on the floor (Ill. 106).[1] Sometimes, too, only the adults are entitled to the table and bench, whereas the children eat their meals on the floor. Tables and benches (Ill. 107)[1] have strong slabs hewn out of one piece of wood, into which slanting wooden legs are inserted (Figs. 123 and 124). This furniture differs fundamentally from [171] that of the Chinese and is almost identical with the tables and benches of our Alpine dwellers. Among the Meau, low wooden stools (Fig. 125) and stools to sit on, with /303/ plaited seats (Fig. 126), are in use, as they are among all the mountain peoples of Farther India.



123

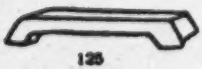
Figs. 123-126. Furniture of the Meau.

Fig. 123. Table, 1/66 nat. size.



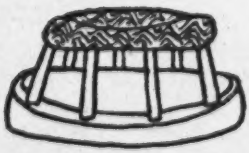
124

Fig. 124. Bench for sitting, 1/34 nat. size.



125

Fig. 125. Stool for sitting, 1/12 nat. size.



126

Fig. 126. Plaited stool for sitting, 1/12 nat. size.

[1] [see cat 116, p 706 - ANALYST]